



Safe & Effective Restroom Cleaning

Clean restrooms reflect positively on your employees, customers, and visitors. To reach this goal you need to use the right chemicals in the right way. Look for restroom cleaning products that:

- Easily remove soil from counters, floors, walls, and fixtures.
- Eliminate bacteria, germs, and viruses.
- Make the restroom appear and smell clean.
- Are safe to both the user and building occupants.
- Have minimal environmental impact.

You can maintain clean and sanitary restrooms by following a two-level cleaning schedule - a combination of regular daily cleaning and weekly deep cleaning.

Regular Daily Cleaning

Trash removal, surface cleaning, disinfection, and restocking supplies needs to be done daily for most commercial or office restrooms.

Facilities in airports, restaurants, and other high traffic sites may need more frequent touch-up cleaning and restocking of soap and paper supplies.

Routine cleaning involves the following tasks:

- Removing trash & replacing can liners;
- Refilling dispensers;
- Dusting high surfaces;
- Cleaning toilets & urinals with a non-acid bowl cleaner;
- Cleaning showers with a non-acid soap remover;
- Cleaning mirrors and other glass surfaces;
- Cleaning walls, ceiling, partitions, doors, & light switches;
- Disinfecting all surfaces and fixtures; and
- Vacuuming floor and wet mopping with a cleaner/disinfectant.

Use mild products for regular daily cleaning.

Use stronger products only for weekly deep cleaning.

Avoid ingredients that are poisonous or that harm the environment.

Wear protective gloves and goggles when mixing or using any cleaning products.

Some products combine cleaning and disinfecting ingredients into one container. These combined products work well only on surfaces that are already relatively clean. For dirty surfaces it is important to clean first, and then apply a separate disinfectant. To work well, this disinfectant must remain in place for at least 10 minutes.

Fairly mild products are available for daily restroom cleaning. Such products are reasonably safe to use, and have little environmental impact. Check the supplier's directions. A dilute product is usually safer to use than a concentrated one.

Deep Cleaning

Deep restroom cleaning needs to be done weekly in most cases. However, a deep cleaning may also be required when you do a restroom for the first time, or when you encounter particularly dirty situations. High traffic restrooms may need a deep cleaning once a day, even if routine cleaning is done more frequently.

Most deep cleaning can be done with your regular chemicals. In addition, it may be necessary to spend more time removing soils with brushes and scrub pads. However, some deep cleaning tasks require stronger chemical products to remove stubborn deposits or stains. Examples include:

- Removing graffiti;
- Cleaning stained toilet bowls; or
- Removing shower tile deposits.



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Important Safety Tips

Use stronger chemicals sparingly and carefully to avoid harming the user or building occupants. Be sure that each janitor is well trained, and if possible, have your people work in buddy teams when using stronger chemicals.

- Corrosive chemicals (acids or caustics) can blind you in seconds. Always wear goggles to protect your eyes.
- Corrosives can also damage your skin and leave scars. Wear gloves to protect your hands.
- Some poisonous chemicals absorb through your skin. Always wear gloves when using products containing glycol ethers or ethanolamines.
- Some poisonous chemicals are easily inhaled. Be sure that your work area has enough ventilation.
- Mixing different products together can create poisonous chemicals. Avoid mixing products, and be sure to rinse out work buckets after each use.

Restroom Cleaning Ingredients

Manufacturers make several products for restroom cleaning. These products range from mild to strong, and have many different ingredients. Some of these cleaning products have acids and other chemicals that can harm you.

The following table lists chemical ingredients commonly found in strong restroom cleaners. Some are relatively safe if you wear gloves and goggles, while others you should not use. In addition, there are some chemicals that may be safe to a janitor wearing gloves and goggles, but that can harm the environment.

Use Extreme Care or Avoid - Health Risk To Janitor

Butane or Isobutane (aerosol propellants)	Ethanolamines	Phosphoric Acid	Sodium Bisulfate
Diphosphonic Acid	Glycol Ethers (such as butoxyethanol)	Propane	Sodium Carbonate
	Hydroxyacetic Acid	Quaternary Ammonium Chloride	Sodium Hydroxide

Do Not Use - Severe Health Risk To Janitor & Building Occupants

Bleach (Sodium Hypochlorite)	Nitritotriacetate	Paradichlorobenzene	Phenol
Hydrochloric Acid	Nitritotriacetic acid	Perchloroethylene	Tetrachloroethylene

Avoid if Possible - Will Harm The Environment

DiButyl Phthalate	Nonyl Phenyl Ethoxylate	Octyl Phenyl Ethoxylate
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In addition, sewer districts prohibit discharges of some of these chemicals, such as paradichlorobenzene, phenol, and tetrachloroethylene, as well as acids or bases that are corrosive (having a pH less than 4-5 or greater than 11-12). Avoid products that make your sewer discharge illegal.

Where to get more information

Here are four ideas for obtaining more information about the health and safety risks of the cleaning products that you use:

1. Read the product label and carefully follow the directions it gives for safe use.
2. Get a material safety data sheet for each product you use. Look for a phone number on the container label and contact customer service at the manufacturer. Or ask the store where you got the product.

Read each material safety data sheet when you get it - don't wait for an accident. Focus on the risks the product presents to the user. Look for the personal protective gear that the supplier recommends.
3. Contact either your county health department or local sewer agency. Staff of these organizations can answer health, safety, and environmental questions that you have.
4. Search the Internet. You can find general information about chemicals and janitorial products on the Internet. One web site to visit is **www.chemfinders.com**. Another is **www.Cleanlink.com**. Many chemical companies also have web sites at which they provide product safety information.

This fact sheet was prepared for the Janitorial Products Pollution Prevention Project.